

**For:** Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, and Utah State and County Offices

**Catfish Producers Approved Under the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program**

**Approved by:** Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



**1 Overview**

**A Background**

Under the TAA Program, both technical assistance and cash benefits are provided to eligible agricultural commodity producers if an increase in imports has contributed importantly to a decline in price, resulting in a drop in net farming or fishing income.

FAS has determined, based on a petition on behalf of catfish producers filed by the Southeastern Fisheries Association of Tallahassee, Florida, that increased imports of catfish and fillets of Vietnamese basa and tra contributed importantly to a decline in prices from January 2002 through December 2002 when compared with the previous 5-year average. The petition was filed on behalf of producers in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, and Utah. Commercial catfish producers represented by the approved petition in those 17 States are now eligible to apply for TAA benefits.

**B Purpose**

This notice provides the approved States and County Offices with:

- information about the FAS certification of petitions filed by catfish producers
- instructions to begin sign-up for catfish producers represented by the FAS-certified petition.

Disposal Date	Distribution
January 1, 2005	Above State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

## 2 Catfish Producers Eligible for TAA

### A Approved Petition

Notice SP-5, paragraph 4, provided the petition review and certification process for groups or individuals acting as authorized representatives of an association of agricultural commodity producers electing to petition FAS for TAA benefits.

A petition was filed on behalf of catfish producers in 17 States by the Southeastern Fisheries Association of Tallahassee, Florida. Following a review of this petition, it has been approved and certified as eligible for TAA benefits by FAS.

### B Notification of Approved Petition

The approved petition for catfish, as identified in subparagraph A, will be implemented based on the issuance of a Departmental press release on November 18, 2003. This announcement will start the 90-calendar day application period.

A notice summarizing the petition determination and the reasons for making the determination will be published in the Federal Register as soon as practical.

### C Sign-Up Period

Sign-up for TAA benefits for catfish producers covered by the approved petition will begin on November 18, 2003, and will continue for 90 calendar days, ending on February 17, 2004.

Individual TAA applicants shall submit the completed FSA-229, according to Notice SP-5, Exhibit 1, by **COB February 17, 2004**, to the FSA County Office or USDA Service Center nearest the place of residence.

**Note:** Acceptable production evidence, such as receipts, ledgers, income statements, landing reports, etc., shall be submitted at the time application for TAA benefits is made with FSA, but **no later than February 17, 2004**, to verify the production of catfish produced from January 2002 through December 2002. All other documentation required to receive TAA cash payments must be submitted by COB September 30, 2004.

## **Notice SP-11**

### **2 Catfish Producers Eligible for TAA (Continued)**

#### **D Eligible Producers**

Notice SP-5, subparagraph 5 C requires County Offices to verify that each TAA applicant is covered by a certified petition. An eligible TAA applicant is a catfish producer as defined according to 1-PL, subparagraph 110 A, who commercially markets catfish in one of the 17 States approved for TAA catfish payment, and directly or indirectly as determined by the Secretary, shares in the risk of producing catfish. Eligible catfish producers may apply for TAA benefits anytime during the sign-up period, according to subparagraph C.

#### **E Eligible Production**

The quantity of catfish eligible for payment:

- must be produced from January 2002 through December 2002
- must be marketed in one or more of the following States: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, and Utah
- must be verified by sales receipts or other marketing evidence
- must be fish edible and marketed for human consumption, exclusive of byproducts or renderings.

#### **F Payment Rate**

The estimated payment rate before pro-ration is 3 tenths of a cent per pound. This payment rate will change if proration is necessary once all petitions have been approved and application periods have ended.

#### **G Action**

State and County Offices shall:

- begin accepting FSA-229's and acceptable production evidence for TAA applicants based on sales receipts or other evidence of marketing in an approved state
- verify that catfish production occurred in an approved state
- provide information to catfish producers about TAA program requirements through:
  - over-the-counter discussion
  - newsletters
  - other methods of communication, as applicable.